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RR RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHNE #0836 0801300
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 201300Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0986
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 2667
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 1975
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 1772
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 000836

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [BT](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: ON EVE OF ELECTION, BHUTANESE WARY OF COMMUNIST
TERRORISTS

REF: A. NEW DELHI 264

[1](#)B. NEW DELHI 431

[1](#)1. (U) Due to months of low-level bombing campaigns by leftist groups, Bhutan as a precaution is sealing two border areas with India in the run-up to the Bhutanese National Assembly elections scheduled for March 24. Just as occurred during the December 31 upper house election, the border between Bhutan and the Indian state of Assam will be secured from March 23 - March 25 (0600) local time. The border between Bhutan and West Bengal will be secured from March 22 - March 25. Both India and Bhutan have deployed additional forces along their borders to mitigate any possible infiltration by rebel groups.

[1](#)2. (U) The Bhutanese elections are a milestone for the monarchical state and there have been attempts to disrupt the process. The most recent incident occurred when a man in Dagana in Southwestern Bhutan was killed while handling an explosive device in his house. According to the media, the would-be-bomber (Bik Bahadur Subba) was handling the explosive device left there by Communist Party of Bhutan (CPB) cadre Ramesh Subba. Subba as well as three other communist terrorists are being held responsible by Bhutan for two bombs planted in Dagapela in Dagana district on January 20 (Ref A). Another bombing occurred on February 3 in the Bhutanese Samste district, which was conducted by a Nepalese-based Bhutanese insurgent group (Ref B).

Comment: Rebel Threat More A Nuisance

[1](#)3. (SBU) The increased bombings by Bhutanese rebels have been largely unsuccessful in disrupting the coming elections. Nevertheless, Indian and Bhutanese authorities feel the need to increase border security to make sure elections are conducted without a hitch. The groups behind the attacks, including the CPB, Bhutan Tigers Force (BTF), Bhutan Maoist Party (BMP) and the Revolutionary Front of Bhutan (URFB) have continued their attempts to undermine democratic governance/reforms if their demands for repatriation of Bhutanese in the Nepali camps and their inclusion in the democratic process, are not met. All of these groups are generally regarded as operating mostly from outside Bhutan

and make incursions or use contacts within Bhutan to conduct attacks. Although several bombings have occurred over the past few months, they have not blocked the path toward Bhutan's elections. While it is good that the Bhutanese are taking these threats seriously and increasing security, it seems to be a precautionary measure, rather than a necessity for successful elections. End Comment.

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